XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
WA602034

20734

February 2, 1966

Mr. Herb Victor
Program-Production Manager
WMAL-TV
4461 Connecticut Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Mr. Victor,

In answer to your letter of January 28, I certainly agree the subject matter is of "significant importance". It is fine that a TV station will air such subject matter in prime time. With this I have no argument. I thoroughly approve. What I now even more resent is the presence of and commercial acceptability of official propaganda, mistakenly labelled as of station origin.

Crediting the "Big Picture" is meaningless. None of us know who produces that. Saying it was presented by WMAL does count, and that you did. If there was a credit line, beginning or end, to the Army, I do not recall it.

I do regret that principles, especially like freedom of the press, are not established and wars, like in Vietnam, are not won by propaganda or lies. Nor is that essential of a democratic society, freedom and integrity of information so that we can have an informed and enlightened electorate.

I am not addressing myself now nor did I in my letter to any "different viewpoints". Those we must have and must tolerate, not matter how some of us might object to them. I was talking about lies - LIES and propaganda. Remember, Mr. Victor, there is also more involved here than the few bucks WMAL saves by taking this celuloid boiler-plate. If the world blows up, the stockholders won't be able to use that dough. And if our country is erring or has erred, this is a possible consequence, And this is a country where each individual citizen bears a personal responsibility, because he elects his government. He can do that intelligently only on the basis of accurate information.

Of course, I cannot say I have seen all the programs on this subject you have aired. There was a network show I thought was so fair I wrote New York and got a script. If there was anything else like it, it esceped our careful attention. You should present " well-balanced, informed coverage". I don't think you have and I do not see how those fine words can be applied to this particular show. The Army, of course, wants to justify all it does, like burning women and children, their houses and pitiful property, poisoning their fields and other fine civilized things like that. This is, naturally, the way we free people. But it is also the way tremendous sums of money are spent, the way Congress is "persuaded" to appropriate these funds, the way normally decent people are persuaded not to protest inhumanity and barbarities almost unequalled in history. I do not think a TV station should be part of it.